

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVANCED FELLOWSHIPS
in MENTAL ILLNESS RESEARCH AND TREATMENT
and
HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Call for Applications 2013-2015

CENTRAL ARKANSAS VETERANS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
North Little Rock, Arkansas

The South Central Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (SC MIRECC) and the Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) Center for Mental Health Outcomes Research (CeMHOR) are currently recruiting applicants for two-year advanced fellowships. These interdisciplinary programs aim to train psychiatrists, psychologists, and other health professionals (see eligibility requirements below) to become outstanding clinical or health services researchers in high priority areas of mental health. In concert with the theme of the SC MIRECC, our fellowships emphasize focus areas including rural mental health or telemedicine, mental health in primary care, implementation science, and access to care, PTSD, and substance abuse. Individualized, mentored research and clinical training are combined with a state-of-the-art curriculum that emphasizes research methods, statistics, epidemiology, mental health systems, quality improvement methods, education, and service delivery. Fellows will be offered abundant opportunities to increase their experience and knowledge in the clinical treatment of mental health disorders.



The MIRECC and HSR&D fellowships at CAVHS are part of the national VA Special Fellowships Program. Each of the 10 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) MIRECC fellowship sites, which are located across the US, are linked electronically for didactic, academic, and research efforts. Outstanding didactic research training is coordinated through a fellowship hub site located at the Palo Alto VA Medical Center, while research mentors are typically located at the training site. In collaboration with their mentors, fellows will develop and implement a research project, publish and present findings, participate in grant writing, and utilize the latest technology for educational activities and clinical service delivery. HSR&D fellows at our site participate in the MIRECC hub site as well as the local fellowship didactics.

Training Site: The Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS) is a large and complex VA Medical System that is academically affiliated with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). CAVHS is located in a metropolitan area of approximately 580,000 people and draws from a primary service area of 275,000 Veterans. CAVHS providers also serve some family members of Veterans. The consolidated, tertiary care medical center provides medical, surgical, psychiatric, rehabilitation, and nursing home services, as well as a wide variety of outpatient, specialty and primary care programs at two large medical facilities and several community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) throughout the state. CAVHS offers a wide range of clinical training opportunities in mental health and serves as a training site for numerous clinical training programs based jointly at CAVHS/UAMS.

CAVHS also offers a very rich environment for research training. In addition to serving as an “anchor site” for the SC MIRECC, CAVHS is also home to the HSR&D CeMHOR and the VA Quality Improvement in Mental Health (MH QUERI) programs. The CAVHS research centers maintain a close relationship with the UAMS Division of Health Services Research at the Psychiatric Research Institute. The researchers working in these settings represent one of the largest and most successful groups of mental health services researchers in the U.S. Also,

the SC MIRECC collaborates with investigators at its other anchor sites in Houston, New Orleans, and Oklahoma City.. These resources create an ideal environment for trainees interested in becoming independent research investigators.

Arkansas, “the Natural State”, offers a multitude of scenic landscapes along with natural and cultural resources and programs. Little Rock, the state capitol, has many excellent restaurants, a thriving cultural community, museums, public golf courses, Pinnacle Mountain state park, and the 17-mile Arkansas River Trail for walking, jogging, and cycling. Arkansas has a large state park system with campsites, hiking trails, mountain lodges, interpretive events, fall foliage programs, and activities for all seasons.

Fellowship Training Goals: The CAVHS fellowship training program aims to produce graduates with a strong sense of professional identity, confidence in their research and clinical skills, and the ability to be leaders in mental health locally and nationally. The goals of the fellowship training program are to:

1. *Provide fellows with excellent training in research (about 75% time).* This training will consist of formal didactics in research design and methods and hands-on research mentoring by VA faculty, most of whom have appointments at the UAMS Department of Psychiatry and College of Public Health. Each fellow will initiate and complete at least one individual research project, including publishing results.
2. *Place fellows in clinical settings appropriate to their research interests such that their clinical practice (at least 25% time) will complement and enhance their research training.* Fellows will use an evidence-based approach to clinical care, treatment planning, and service delivery.
3. *Offer fellows other opportunities to optimize their success in academic settings, such as career mentoring, exposure to grant writing and grantsmanship, technical writing, training in research ethics and Institutional Review Board procedures, and opportunities to provide clinical and/or research supervision in their area of focus.*

Fellowship Qualifications: Eligibility requirements are different for the MIRECC and HSR&D fellowships. In brief, to qualify for the MIRECC Advanced fellowship, applicants must have: 1) U.S. citizenship; 2) completed post-residency training for physicians with Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or American Osteopathic Association residencies or 3) earned a doctorate in clinical or counseling psychology from an American Psychological Association accredited program and completed an APA accredited internship in clinical or counseling psychology; or (for other health professions) have completed doctoral degrees and equivalent training (see VA website for specific information). For the HSR&D fellowship, non-clinician applicants (e.g., anthropologists, sociologists, economists) may apply, but must complete their Ph.D. training prior to the fellowship start date. Applicants must have the desire to pursue a professional career with a focus on mental health services and research. Successful applicants must also meet all current requirements for VA employment, including registration for the draft if applicable.

Stipend: \$42,239 plus benefits for the 1st year, beginning between on or before September 1 2013; stipend amount may change.

Benefits: Health Insurance, 13 days paid vacation and up to 13 days of sick leave, additional authorized absence may be approved for educational opportunities.

Deadline: Applications will be reviewed beginning January 7, 2013. Applications will be accepted until positions are filled.

Application materials to submit:

- Cover Letter describing
 - Desired focus area(s) of research interest, in order of preference
 - Vision of how this training will advance your career
 - Research training and goals
 - Clinical experience and goals (for non-clinicians, relevance of your work to VA mental health)
 - Experience working with diverse populations

- Curriculum Vitae – including: description of your residency experience (physicians) or internship rotations (psychologists) or equivalent experiences and anticipated graduation date if relevant
- 3 Letters of Recommendation addressed to Dr. Dinesh Mittal (physicians and non-clinicians) or Dr. Patricia Dubbert (psychologists and non-physician clinicians) from training directors, research, and clinical supervisors familiar with your work
- Official graduate school transcripts (sent directly by your university)
- Two or three samples of scholarly writing, such as an executive summary of your dissertation, journal publication, or research manuscript

Interviews: In-person interviews will be by invitation only. Specific details about the interview process will be sent to qualified applicants after the completed application is received and reviewed. Interviews will be scheduled beginning in mid January.

Selection & Notification: The fellowship Directors will begin ranking candidates and extending offers January 7, 2013. Applicants who are no longer under consideration for a fellowship position will be notified as soon as possible, usually by email.

Note: VA fellows are subject to all employment rules applying to federal employees, including selective service registration if applicable. The United States Government does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability and genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, or other non-merit factor.

This fellowship is currently not accredited by the American Psychological Association. The program is currently preparing the documentation required for accreditation consideration.

Please direct questions about the Advanced Fellowship Programs at CAVHS and application process to Ms. Kristin Ward (see contact information below).

Administrative Contact / Submission of Materials:

Kristin Ward
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 N. Little Rock, AR 72114-1706
 501-257-1236
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For more information about the national MIRECC Advanced Fellowships program visit the website:
<http://www.mirecc.va.gov/mirecc-fellowship.asp>

CAVHS also hosts a one-year clinical fellowship program with emphasis areas in psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery and in PTSD. For information about the clinical fellowship, please visit the website:
http://www.littlerock.va.gov/careers/psychology/fellowship/Psychology_Fellowship_Prgram.asp